

## Boney M's Bobby Farrell dies on the same day and in the same town as Rasputin... the subject of one of the band's biggest hits

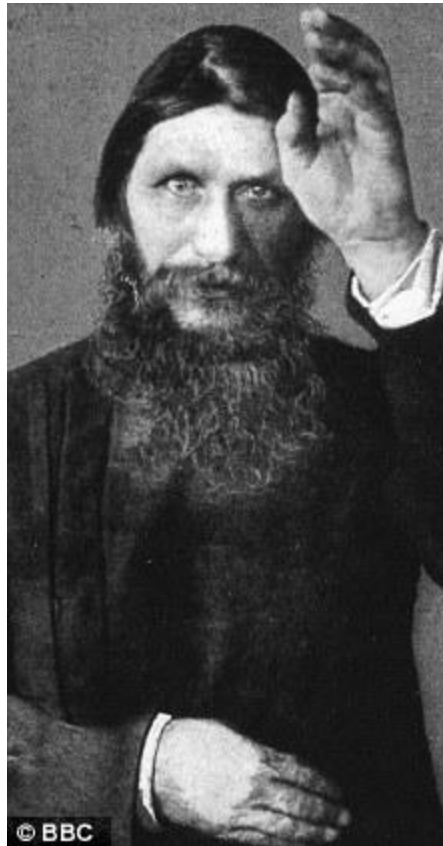
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Life sadly imitated art for Boney M's Bobby Farrell today as his death turned into an uncanny coincidence relating to one of his biggest hits.

The frontman died in St Petersburg yesterday on same date and in the exact same town as mad Russian monk Rasputin - who was the subject of the band's 1978 top three single.

The eccentric frontman was found dead in his hotel room aged just 61 just hours after a performance in the city where the band rose to stardom in the Soviet era, according to his agent.



Weird coincidence: Boney M singer Bobby Farrell was found dead on December 29 in St Petersburg... just like Rasputin

But while the cause of Farrell's death is still not clear, it couldn't be more different to that of Grigori Rasputin, who, said the lyrics in Boney M's song, was the 'lover of the Russian Queen'. Rasputin, was 47 when he his body was recovered from Neva River. He had drowned after being been poisoned, shot four times, badly beaten, and thrown in the river.

### WHO WAS RASPUTIN?

Grigori Rasputin has been described as one of the most scandalous figures in Russian history. Born the son of a peasant in 1869, he was a self-styled 'holy man' who is believed to have had a huge influence on Emperor Nicholas II, but especially his wife Alexandra, and their son Alexis, who seemed to miraculously overcome his hemophilia when Rasputin was around, and the family began to trust him and call him their 'holy man' and 'our friend'.

Alexandra acted as ruler when Nicholas took command of the Russian troops fighting the Germans during the First World War and Rasputin acted as her advisor, giving her advice on how to run the troops and the nation, which Nicholas went with, but eventually left the country in ruin.

Members of the Russian nobility, including Grand Duke Dimitri Pavlovich and Prince Felix Yussoupov, blamed all the troubles on Rasputin and plotted to kill him.

His body was fished out of the icy Neva River after being been poisoned, shot four times, badly beaten, and thrown in.

He was the subject of Boney M's hit which was a Top 5 hit across Europe.

Today, Farrell's agent John Seine - who is based in the Netherlands - said of Farrell: 'He did a show last night as part of Bobby Farrell's Boney M and they found him this morning dead in his hotel room.

'He did not feel well last night, and was having problems with his breathing, but he did the show anyway,' Seine added.

The cause of his death was not immediately clear, according to Sergei Kapitanov, a representative of St. Petersburg's branch of Russia's investigative committee.

Boney M - consisting of Farrell, Maisie Williams, Liz Mitchell and Marcia Barrett - were one of the most successful bands of the late 1970s with Farrell becoming famed for his lip-synching as much as his dancing in the disco band.

The band's hits included Daddy Cool, Ma Baker and Rasputin. Indeed, their version of Mary's Boy Child – Oh My Lord was the Christmas No1 in 1978 and is the tenth biggest-selling single of all time in Britain.

The double A-sided single Brown Girl In The Ring and Daddy Cool, also released in 1978, was the biggest-selling single of that year. Indeed, it remains the sixth biggest selling single of all time in Britain.

Farrell was born on the island of Aruba, one of the Lesser Antilles. He lived in Norway and the Netherlands before moving to Germany.

He worked largely as nightclub DJ before music producer Frank Farian signed him up for the new pop group he was putting together, which became Boney M.

Farrell was the sole male singer in the group.

However, Farian later revealed that Bobby made almost no vocal contributions to the group's records.



Heyday: Bobby with other Boney M members. The band reached their peak in the 1980's but Bobby performed the night before he died

Instead, Farian sang the male parts on the songs in the studio. Farrell did, however, perform the songs live. The band Boney M was put together by German singer-songwriter Frank Farian who also produced most of the vocals for the group. Frank was also producer to group Milli Vanilli and caused controversy when he admitted that the guys who fronted the group did not actually sing the songs.



Bandmates: Maizie Williams, Bobby Farrell, Marscia Barrett and Liz seen in Moscow in 1981  
The original Boney M band broke up more than 20 years ago. Farrell was the frontman for a group called Bobby Farrell and Boney M.

However, their influence is still felt today after superstar pop singer Lady Gaga sampled the vocal 'Ma-Ma-Ma' hook from hit song 'Ma Baker' for her hit single Poker Face last year.

And dance group Duck Sauce released a track in 2010 sampling track Gotta Go Home on their hit single Barbra Streisand.

Farian has produced a new Boney M. version, also called Barbra Streisand, which was released early December 2010.





Right up to the end: Bobby performed the night before he died

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-1342807/Boney-Ms-Bobby-Farrell-dies-day-town-Rasputin--subject-bands-biggest-hits.html>